




Geographic Naming Policy 2017

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Implementation of this policy relies on closely following the principles and procedures outlined in the [Naming rules for places in Victoria](#). Please ensure that you refer to these rules when naming geographical features, localities and roads. The rules can be found at: www.propertyandlandtitles.vic.gov.au

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The Geographic Naming Policy has been developed to provide a consistent approach to geographic naming requests and ensures that all Wyndham features, localities and roads are appropriately named whilst preserving its history. The policy identifies the key considerations for Council when deliberating on geographic naming requests.

In observing this policy, Council aims at all time to act in a manner consistent with the naming rules. In selecting appropriate names, Council will endeavour to create a “sense of place” and to honour and observe the local character of the relevant geographic area. Council will also aim to honour heritage and historical connections to the relevant precinct and select names consistent with identifiable historic naming trends in the local precinct.

2. BACKGROUND

Under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (*‘the Act’*), council is a naming authority, and as such, is responsible for naming public geographic features, localities and public roads in the municipal district. The primary aim of the Act is to ensure that new or changed names are notified to the Registrar, that names are registered, and that all geographic names data is captured for mapping purposes.


When considering geographic naming requests, Council is required to abide by the naming rules and register all geographic names in the Register of Geographic Names, VICNAMES. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DEWLP) has informally advised that it is expected that municipalities register or record new or renamed features, localities and roads. Council is required to assist private owners with the naming and recording of private features and roads.

The Act defines places as “any place or building that is, or likely to be, of public or historical interest and includes, but is not restricted to –

- (a) township, area, park, garden, reserve of land, suburb and locality;
- (b) topographical feature, including undersea feature; and
- (c) street, road, transport station, government school, hospital and government nursing home”.

It is important that the naming rules are followed to ensure that any names proposed are acceptable.

Experience in determining geographic names has demonstrated the community’s desire to retain historical place names. The Wyndham 2040 Community Plan was developed through extensive consultation with residents about what is important to them and the future of Wyndham.



The Community Plan seeks to carefully balance the preservation, protection and respect for the natural environment, acknowledges the Aboriginal heritage of the area, and as we embrace growth, remember the country beginnings of our town and shire. This has implications for the names chosen for features, localities and roads.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Council recognises the importance of community consultation in naming its property and members of the public, particularly those directly concerned or affected, should be involved in the naming exercise. To this end, Council recognises that the policy adopted for the naming of features, localities or roads includes all statutory requirements and in addition, requires that all names be determined by Council resolution.

The following principles must be used in conjunction with the relevant statutory requirements related to the naming of roads, features and localities. They are designed to ensure no ambiguity, confusion, errors or discrimination are caused by the naming, renaming or boundary change process.

- Principle 2 (A) Ensuring public safety;
- Principle 2 (B) Recognising public interest;
- Principle 2 (C) Linking the name to a place;
- Principle 2 (D) Ensuring names are not duplicated;
- Principle 2 (E) Names must not be discriminatory;
- Principle 2 (F) Recognition and use of Indigenous Australian names;
- Principle 2 (G) Dual names;
- Principle 2 (H) Using commemorative names;
- Principle 2 (I) Using commercial and business names;
- Principle 2 (J) Language;
- Principle 2 (K) Directional names to be avoided;
- Principle 2 (L) Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality;

Council will also;

Preserve the heritage and identity of Wyndham's localities, retain and register existing names rather than renaming and will link the name to place through the use of the following 'naming themes':

- location (including locality and road names);
- Aboriginal heritage and language;
- prior uses of the land and the people associated with it;
- local flora and fauna;
- significant contributors to the community who are deceased including women;

- social and historical events;
- historical exploration and settlement; and
- recognition of cultural diversity in Wyndham.

Acknowledge and include in the naming process:

- The Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- local historical societies;
- multi-cultural groups or communities; and
- women's and youth groups.

Only use names outside of the above naming themes upon discretion and where it is necessary to do so.

4. POLICY INITIATIVES/ACTIONS

4.1 POLICY SCOPE


This policy relates to all publicly owned features, localities and public roads located in Wyndham for which council is determined to be a naming authority as detailed in the naming rules. Victorian Government authorities such as VicRoads, Parks Victoria and the Department of Education are determined to be the Naming Authority for public features or roads that they own or maintain.

It should be noted that all privately owned geographic features and roads need to be named and recorded in VICNAMES. These names should also comply with the principles outlined in the Guidelines.

Council is expected to register or record new or renamed features, localities and roads. It is not expected that Council register or record existing names even where they are not listed on VICNAMES. Any reasons or history provided for names chosen can be submitted to the Office of Geographic Names for entry into VICNAMES as historical data.

Council will only consider requests that are made in writing or through the Notification and Editing Service (NES).

To demonstrate genuine respect for Aboriginal culture, heritage and people, Council has made a commitment to “explore opportunities for incorporating Aboriginal place-names, languages, design features and cultural heritage information in a wide-range of existing infrastructure and future developments” in the Wyndham Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2019. Specific deliverables under this commitment are to:

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- Engage the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages to provide guidelines and resources for respectful naming processes in proposal outlines, tenders and selection criteria for projects related to naming new and existing infrastructure;
 - Collaborate with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, Traditional Owner organisations and Wyndham Aboriginal communities to create a name for the Wyndham Aboriginal Community Centre that communicates its cultural significance;
 - Encourage external stakeholders to recognise Aboriginal languages in place-naming through promotion of the principals and guidelines provided by the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

This policy will operate independently of Council's Plaques and Memorial Policy.

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the Sports Facility User Guide 2015, and the Wyndham Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2019.

Council will not promote the process of a competition for the purposes of undertaking naming of any road, feature or locality within the municipality.

4.1 ROAD NAMES

Council will work collaboratively with developers to create compliant road names for new subdivisions. However, it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the features and roads in a subdivision are named per the principles set out in the naming rules. Approval of new road names on plans of subdivision will be administered by the Planning and Building Department to ensure that proposed names comply with the naming rules. Themes used by developers to name roads in subdivisions can be outside of the themes outlined in this policy, however Council can suggest these themes for the developer to consider. The Planning and Building Department maintains a database of all road names for reference by Council, including those that are proposed or awaiting approval.

The naming rules for places in Victoria provide that private roads and features in subdivisions or on private land need to be assessed against the rules and recorded in VICNAMES. It is the responsibility of the owner to name any private roads and features and to forward the names to the Office of Geographic Names to be recorded, but Council may need to assist the owner with this process.

All other road naming or alterations to existing road names shall be referred to the Governance Unit to ensure compliance with this policy and registration of the name with the Registrar of Geographic Names. It should be noted that the definition of a 'road' also includes alleyways, bridges, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.

The Office of Geographic Names has advised that it will routinely and randomly audit plans of subdivision to ensure that road names are compliant with the principles set out in the naming rules. Names that are found to be non-compliant will require renaming.

4.2 FEATURE NAMES

In general, features shall be named in the following manner:

- describing the feature and its locality; or (if this creates a duplicate)
- describing the feature and its abutting road name; or (if this creates a duplicate)
- using a name already identified by Council for use as a feature name; or
- consultation with the respective committee of management, sporting or community club and the public.

Council should give preference to naming its prominent local features according to the themes outlined in this policy. Important public features should only be named by describing the feature and its locality as an interim measure. From time-to-time Council may wish to consult with local interest groups to develop an appropriate list of names to use for new geographic features.

4.3 LOCALITY NAMES

Wyndham's locality (commonly known as suburbs) names are formally assigned and registered with Land Use Victoria (or VICNAMES). They are named according to a historical link to the respective area.

To preserve the heritage and identity of Wyndham's localities, alterations to existing names shall not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there is total community support for a locality name change and the name change is needed under extraordinary circumstances. Alteration to a locality name shall be a rarity. Council will not consider new locality or boundary changes for reasons of improving real estate valuations or lowering insurance premiums. Excision of an area of land within a locality for reassignment of a new locality name shall also not be permitted.

Should an area within a locality need to be named for identity and emergency services purposes, it is to be assigned as a locality name, subject to the following criteria being met:

- The area to be named has become an identified destination of state or national tourism significance.
- Major development in a suburb has severely changed the characteristic of the suburb to the extent that there is confusion in identifying the locality by emergency services and the general public.
- The merits of the naming proposal warrant the assignment of a locality name.



5. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The naming rules allow for naming to occur by delegation of authority

- the naming of localities, important public features, major roads and proposals of renaming are required to be resolved by Council at an Ordinary Council Meeting.
- the Manager, Planning and Building has delegated authority to approve new names on plans of subdivision on behalf of Council.
- the Manager, Corporate Affairs has delegated authority to approve all other new geographic names on behalf of Council. These naming proposals may be referred to Council as necessary.

6. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- A naming request may originate from the wider community or Council officers
- Naming requests initiated by individuals or organisations must be in writing.
- A report recommending the naming (or renaming) of a feature, locality or road, is to be referred to the Council for consideration.
- Appropriate consultation regarding a proposed name should be undertaken. This may take the form of advising all abutting property owners about the proposed name and seeking any comments, or placing a public advertisement in the local newspapers inviting comments from affected residents and the public.
- Once a final decision has been made, Council will notify the applicant, all abutting property owners and residents of the Council's decision.
- An internal memo will be sent to relevant Council departments, advising of the new or amended name.
- Arrangements will be made to erect appropriate signage.
- The Council will notify the Registrar of Geographic Names of the new or amended name.
- The Council will notify the relevant public authorities of the new or amended name.
- Naming a road (including rights of way) does not infer any obligation on the Council to improve, upgrade or maintain the road beyond the level of service that preceded the naming of the road.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*
- Naming rules for places in Victoria 2016
- *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 206 and Schedule 10)
- Sports Facility User Guide (2015)
- Wyndham Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2019
- Wyndham 2040 Community Plan
- Wyndham Planning Scheme
- *Planning & Environment Act 1987*

DEFINITIONS

<i>The Act</i>	<i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</i>
The Naming Rules	Naming Rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2016
The Policy	Geographic Naming Policy
Principles	Principles within the Naming Rules which naming proposals must be met.
Geographic Place	Defined by law to cover features, localities and roads.
Features	Including mountains, watercourses, buildings, structures, parks and reserves.
Localities	Where there are officially recognised boundaries including suburbs, towns, cities and regions.
Roads	Including alleyways, bridges, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike path, and walking tracks.
Naming Authorities	Municipal Councils, government departments, or authorities, private organisations.
Registrar	Oversees the Office of Geographic Names.
OGN	Office of Geographic Names.
Immediate Community	Defined as residents, ratepayers, and businesses within the immediate area affected by the proposal.
Extended Community	Includes members within the immediate community along with visitor groups, and government and non-government organisations who have an interest or service in the area.
NES	Notification and Editing Service – online facility for submission and tracking of proposals to the Registrar.
Public Authorities	Local Emergency Services and other public service providers.